

# *Mechanical Memories Magazine*

ISSUE 56

MAY 2011



*The only UK magazine for collectors and enthusiasts of vintage penny slot machines*

# Mechanical Memories Magazine

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Mechanical Memories Magazine

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# Editorial

Hello again, and here we are with the June magazine, although whether or not you actually receive it in June could be more luck than judgement. Yes, this is another late one, but I do plan on getting the magazine out early at some point this year – I just haven't decided when! This is probably a good time to remind you all that there will not be another magazine until September, so you've got the summer to write all those articles, ready for the autumn. And of course, by September we'll be thinking about the Coventry auction. We set the provisional date as 27<sup>th</sup> November, which is now confirmed – usual venue. So please start thinking about all those machines and projects and bit & bobs that you will be entering into the auction – November really will be here a lot quicker than you may think.

It was good to see a few of you down at Brighton during the half term week, and I'm pleased to report that it was a reasonably good week, certainly better than the Easter holidays. Unfortunately, it's been crap since! This year seems to have flown by, and the school summer holidays are fast approaching, so I'm desperately hoping for a good summer. If you're coming down to Brighton in the next couple of months, do pop in to see me. I'm open weekends and throughout the school holidays, although there are usually some days that I cannot open for one reason or another, so it's always best to email me a few days in advance if you're making a special trip.

Now, I usually post all pictures published in the magazine in the MMM forum on the pennymachines website (in colour). Some of you may have noticed that this hasn't been happening this year. I am often a bit slow in posting pictures, and tend to do it as time permits – but it doesn't usually take five months! For highly technical reasons, far beyond my understanding, I was unable to log in until quite recently. Anyway, the problem has now been fixed and I have started posting a few pictures. I'm hoping that by the time you read this I will be more or less up to date, so keep an eye on the forum.

Well, that's about it for now. Many thanks to two of our regular contributors, Robert and Stuart, without whom this issue would be somewhat bare! It would be good to see a few new names making contributions, so during the magazine's summer break please do think about writing an article or two.

Until September, all the best

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*Jerry*

**Front Cover picture:** *rare EScO Grand Farthers Clock grip test at Bygone Times.*



# News and Coming Events

## Slot Machine Auction

Fieldings Auctioneers, based in Stourbridge, West Midlands, are holding an auction entitled 'Mantiques and Boys Toys' on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July (yes, I know it's very short notice, but I only found out about it a couple of days ago). Included in the sale are a good number of slot machines. Mark Hannam of Fieldings sent me this:

*The total number of lots of penny in the slot and amusement machines is around forty items as part of a 630 lot sale. Examples include one arm bandits and coin operated wall machines, Jennings, Mills, Beromat, Bryans, Bingalette etc. The machines are in a variety of conditions, some working, and some needing attention. There are also various cigarette dispensing machines included in the sale along with over 70 cylinder and disc musical boxes.*

All illustrated online at: [www.fieldingsauctioneers.co.uk](http://www.fieldingsauctioneers.co.uk)

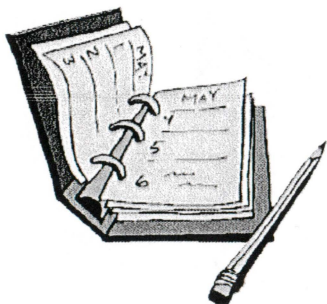
Viewing: Thursday 10am – 4pm, Friday 10am – 8pm and morning of sale 8am – 10am

## Carters at Weston

Once again, Carters Steam Fair will be spending four weeks on the lawns at Weston-Super-Mare this summer, from Sat 6<sup>th</sup> Aug. to Sun 4<sup>th</sup> Sept. Having undergone extensive restoration and refurbishment, the Steam Yachts and Chairoplanes are now back on the road, so as far as I know, Carters will be presenting the full fair at this location. In addition to the rides, the transport fleet also requires attention from time to time. The impressive fleet of Scammells is currently undergoing a programme of restoration, so not all of the tractors are on the road at the moment.....but when you have as many Scammells as Carters Steam Fair, who's going to miss a couple now and again?

Anyway, if you live in the West Country or plan on visiting sometime during Carters time at Weston, be sure not to miss the opportunity of visiting the greatest travelling fair in the country. And don't forget, their Vintage Penny Arcade is definitely not to be missed. Email me some pictures!





# Dates for your diary

**Fieldings 'Mantiques and Boys Toys' Sale** 2<sup>nd</sup> July  
Stourbridge, W. Midlands

**Carters Steam Fair** 6<sup>th</sup> August – 4<sup>th</sup> September  
Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset

**Great Dorset Steam Fair** 31<sup>st</sup> Aug. – 4<sup>th</sup> September  
Tarrant Hinton, Dorset

**MMM Vintage Coin-Op Collectors' Auction** 27<sup>th</sup> November  
Coundon Social Club, Coventry

**Bonhams Mechanical Music & Scientific Instruments Sale** 29<sup>th</sup> November  
Knowle

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Don't forget – if you know of any event which would be of interest to readers of the magazine, please let me know so that I can include details on this page.

# Dreamland

## MARGATE

### Save Dreamland Update June 2011

Following last month's report that a compulsory purchase order had been served on the owners of Dreamland, we can confirm that they have now lodged a formal objection with the Secretary of State, which means that there will be a public inquiry later in the year. The Dreamland Trust will be supporting Thanet District Council in this process.

On a brighter note, Coombs (Canterbury) Limited begin urgent work on the Cinema building this month and they are now responsible for overall site security. We are now running the Scenic Railway restoration as a stand-alone project and I hope to bring you more news in the next edition of MMM.

Last month we said farewell to Project Director, Jonathan Bryant. Jonathan was appointed in January 2010 to see the project through its 'development phase' (as the Heritage Lottery call it), which is now complete. Jonathan has done an excellent job in helping us shape our plans for the new park, which are now ready for submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund for our Stage 2 application. An announcement on how we will be taking the project forward will be made later in the year.

Jan Leandro remains in post as the project's Audience Development Officer, and will continue to move the project forward through to implementation, which will begin once the CPO process has concluded and the Stage 2 funding is in place. Within Jan's role she acts as the Trust's ambassador and is responsible for communication, creative interpretation, partnership building, participation, learning and volunteering as well as developing and delivering events and activities. Talking of which...

Our next event is a celebration of the great British holiday, something that should be of interest to all readers of MMM. This special event runs from 1pm to 6pm on Sunday 17 July, 2011 at the Carlton Cinema, Westgate CT8 8RE. Tickets include a packed lunch, entertainment by the exuberant Private Widdle Social Club and an exclusive double cinematic feature film screening of those masterpieces of innuendo Carry on Camping and Carry on Girls. All this for just £14 per person! Booking is highly recommended to avoid disappointment. To secure your place contact the Carlton Cinema directly by telephone 01843 834290 or visit their website [www.carltoncinema.com](http://www.carltoncinema.com). Disabled access and concessions available.

And now news of an exhibition organised by the Dreamland Trust, which should also be of interest to MMM readers. Too rude to view? You be the judge! A crackdown by the authorities in the early 1950s, in response to Britain's declining morals following World War II, saw the confiscation and destruction of thousands of the great British 'saucy' seaside postcard. The Dreamland Trust, Thanet District Council and the British Cartoon Archive at the University of Kent have worked together to put these postcards back on display and invite you to decide – are they 'too rude to view'?

Hear more of this extraordinary story from our guest speakers at the Margate Museum, the site of the hearings in the old Margate Magistrates Court:

- Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2011 at 2pm a visual talk by Heritage Advisor, Nick Dermott, "1790-1960, Thomas Rowlandson to Donald McGill – the eternal joke"
- Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> July, 2011 at 2pm a visual talk by the British Cartoon Archive Curator, Nick Hiley, "Good, honest vulgarity?: The 1950s' campaign against seaside postcards".

Throughout the exhibition look out for our family of 'saucy' postcard characters around Margate. Take a picture, write a caption and upload it to the forthcoming Facebook page to create an archive of saucy seaside fun – all done in the best possible taste – of course! This is a free exhibition funded by Kent County Council and runs from 23<sup>rd</sup> July to 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2011 at Pie Factory Gallery, 5 Broad Street, Margate CT9 1EW. Visual talks at the Margate Museum in the Old Town CT9 1ER 2pm on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> July and 2pm Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2011 – no booking required. There are full disabled facilities and access at the Pie Factory, but there is limited access to the Margate Museum.

And finally, we are on the move. The Dreamland Margate project team moved on the 27<sup>th</sup> June 2011 to Marine Studios, 17 Albert Terrace, Margate, Kent CT9 1UJ telephone number 01843 294 463. The new office comes with fabulous views right across Margate sands to the Dreamland Cinema – perfect!

## *Nick Laister*

Chairman, The Dreamland Trust

[www.dreamlandmargate.com](http://www.dreamlandmargate.com)

[www.savedreamland.co.uk](http://www.savedreamland.co.uk)



Two new books released on the history of the Spanish City Amusement Park at Whitley Bay!

# **The Spanish City:**

## **The Heart and Soul of Whitley Bay in Words and Pictures**

**compiled and edited by Keith Armstrong**

To generations of Tynesiders the mention of The Spanish City conjures up romantic memories of heady days spent (or misspent!) on the amusements and its other great attractions on the seafront at Whitley Bay. The iconic white dome is still considered with great affection and for many represents the first sign of home as their plane circles in to land at Newcastle Airport.

To celebrate 100 years of The Spanish City, The Northern Voices Community Projects funded by North Tyneside Council have brought out *The Spanish City - the Heart and Soul of Whitley Bay in Words and Pictures*, a book beautifully produced by Keith Armstrong and Peter Dixon with historical background, photos past and present, memories and a wealth of contributions from local writers.

**ISBN Number:** 1871536294

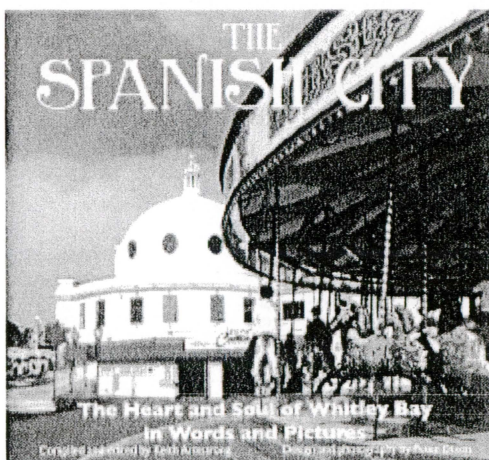
**Format:** Paperback

**Number of Pages:** 36

**Publication Date:** 2011

**Publisher:** North Tyneside Council

**Our Price: £5.00**



# The Dome of Memories

by Mick Sharp

The story of the Spanish City Fairground and its famous entertainment complex. The history of Whitley Bay's Spanish City is retold in a collection of nostalgic anecdotes and unseen photographs spanning the past century. The book, which was published by North Tyneside Council, also features popular fairground rides, financial records and architectural plans.

The book is based on the major exhibition which accompanied the May 2010 centenary event. Much extended, with more information and never-before-seen photographs and plans, the book is the most comprehensive record of the history of the world-famous Dome and Spanish City Fairground.

Chapters of interest to amusement park and roller coaster enthusiasts, include: 'The funfair takes shape'; 'The rides'; 'Riehl's Reel' (a chapter on the legendary Virginia Reel ride); and 'The Corkscrew' (a chapter on the famous 1980s roller coaster, including colour images of its construction).

**ISBN Number:** 99780955251627

**Format:** Paperback

**Number of Pages:** 104

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# Bygone Times

By Stuart Dale

It was a nice day and I didn't have much to do (well actually, I had lots to do, but couldn't get motivated), so after a short 'management' meeting, the decision was made to have a day out. I didn't want to drive too far, and there was a place I had been planning to visit for some time that was only about an hour away. So after loading myself and Mrs Dale into the car, we set off in search of the Bygone Times antiques centre. Bygone Times is situated at Grove Mills, in a small village called Ecclestone, which is near Chorley in Lancashire. It is also the sister mill to the Botany Bay shopping complex that I reviewed in issue 55 of this magazine, and surprise surprise! Bygone Times also has a vintage Penny Arcade. The machines in the arcade are owned and run by Clive Baker, who I am sure you will all be familiar with. Clive is the chap who also runs the vintage arcade on Southport pier.

The Grove mills site consists of three large rooms, which once held hundreds of textile machines. Production of textiles finally ceased at Grove mills in the early 1980s, and the antiques centre was opened a few years later. It is packed with every type of antiques, collectables & memorabilia and is well worth a visit. There is also a very nice tea room which is aptly named the 'Spinners tea room and Café'. This is situated just inside the main entrance, so as it was almost lunchtime, we went straight in for a spot of lunch. As antique centre cafes go, this was one of the best we have ever been in. It was clean, with friendly staff and the food was very good.

After lunch we spent over an hour wandering through the stalls and displays until we reached the Penny Arcade. The arcade is in a side room right at the back corner of mill three. You will know when you are getting near as the fairground music starts to get louder. Once inside the arcade you are greeted by a good selection of vintage machines, some are quite unusual and rare. One of which is the Human Analyst; this is the first time I have ever seen this machine in full working order. In fact, it is stated on a display card on the machine, that this is one of only two surviving examples of the Human Analyst. It is a fortune teller, and you are instructed to put one penny in the slot, and grab hold of the perforated metal bar with both hands. The mirrors inside the machine start to rotate scanning your face, the machine then delivers a card with a personally type written prediction just for you. Another rarity was the Grandfathers Clock grip tester, and again fully working on old penny. There are also two other grip test machines you can try, just in case you don't like what the first machine says. There was also the Laughing Sailor, which Mrs Dale can never resist, so I had to put a penny or two in that one to keep her amused. I also liked the Miser working model in its bright red case.

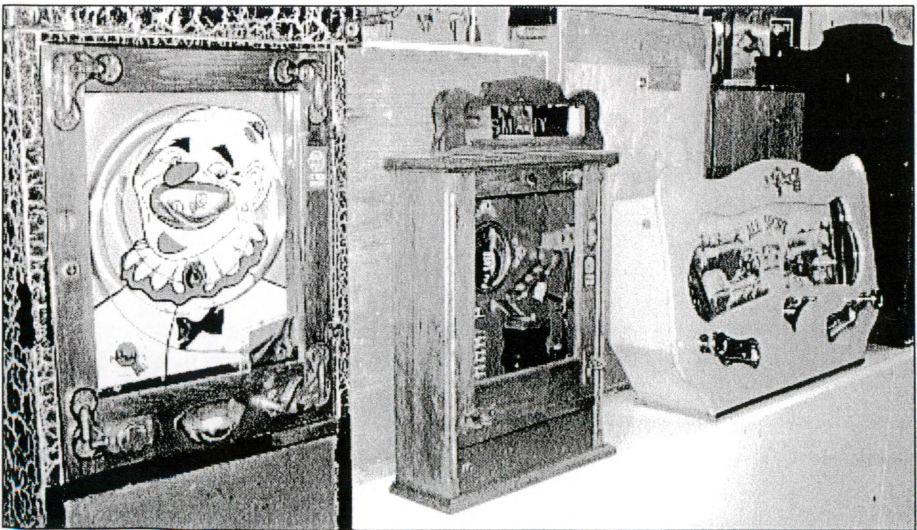
Now I don't know how true this is, but I was told by one of the people running the mill, that Clive originally had a Haunted house working model sited there, but the machine was always playing up. This was finally put down to the fact that the mill has no less than six ghost of its own. One of the ghosts has been seen standing in the entrance to the room where the vintage arcade is sited. Maybe that ghost didn't like being upstaged or replaced by a machine???? The arcade's central display had a very nice penny tapper machine called **Pool-Tote** at one end, very hard to win on this machine. There is also a selection of wall machines down each side; these include a Bryans two player game **Allsport** in its distinctive yellow case.

Anyway that is Bygone Times and the vintage arcade. So next time you are passing, why not drop in for a play on the machines? And don't forget to keep an eye out for that GHOST!!!!

*Stuart Dale*

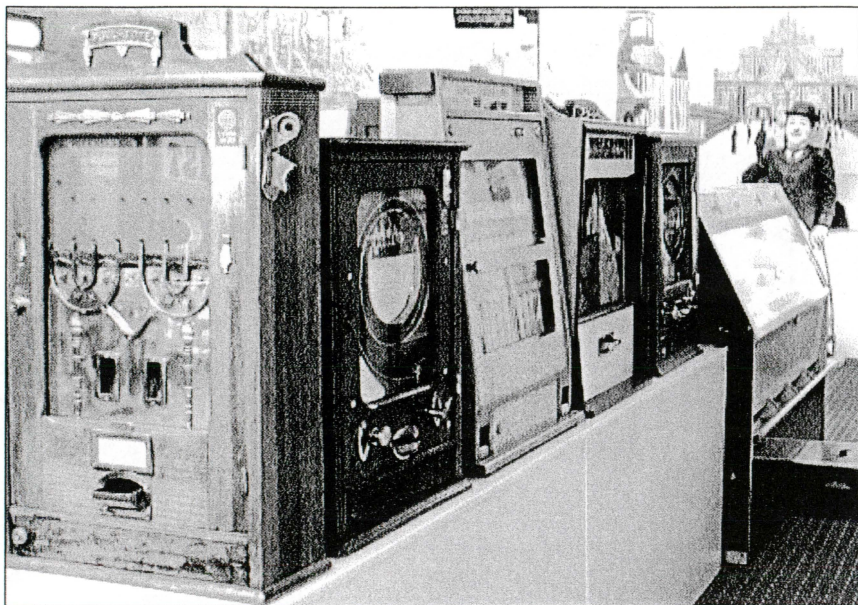
## Editor's Note:

Although Clive has been operating at this site for quite a number of years, I should just make the point that Darren Hesketh has now taken over. He's still using some of Clive's machines and gradually introducing his own.



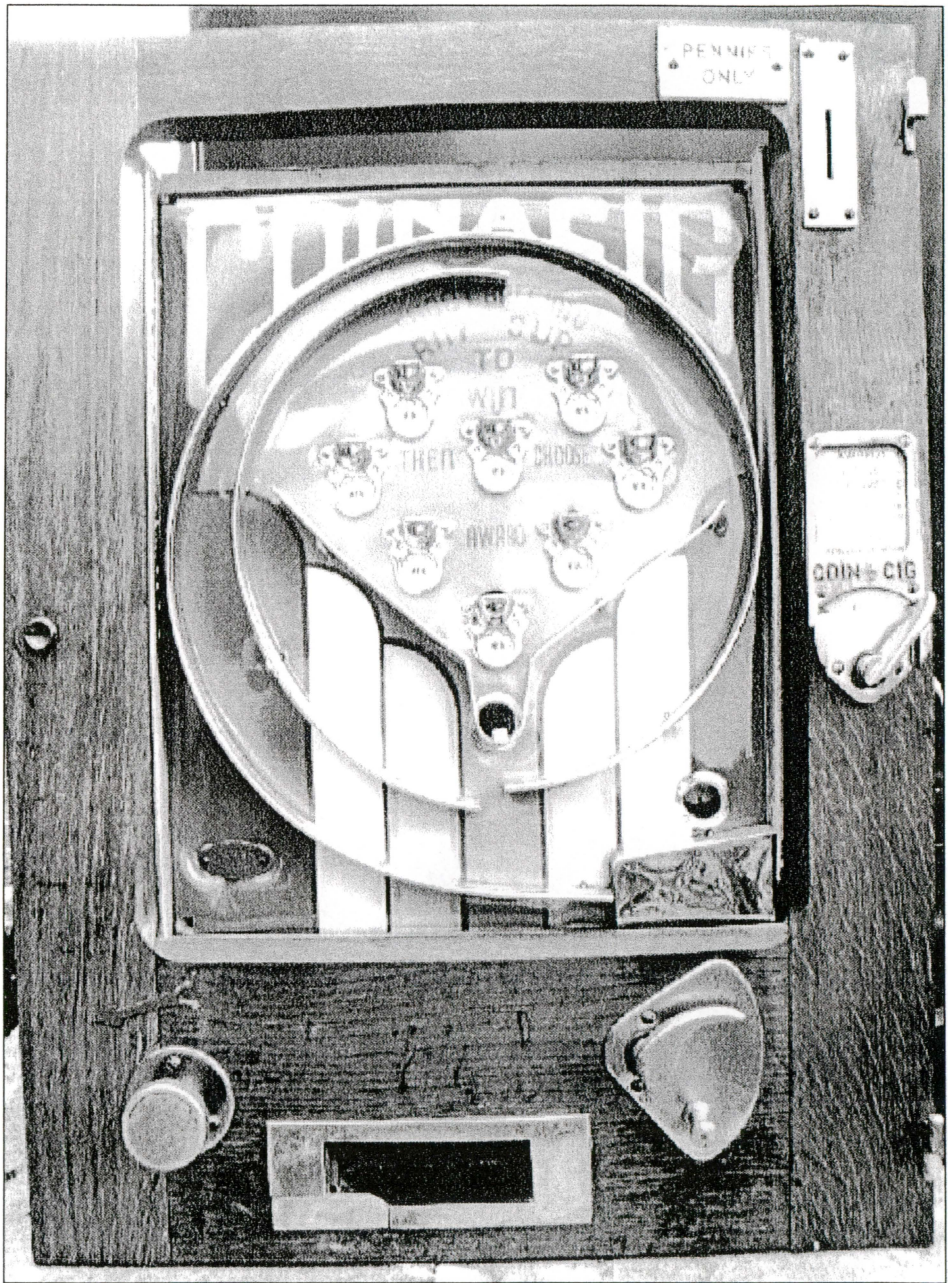
*Bryans Pilwin, repro Smithy and Bryans Allsport.*





**Top**, a variety of wall machines, in the foreground an original *Quested Pool Tote*.  
**Below**, a very nice Saxony Grip Test and a, er, not so nice Sega bandit!



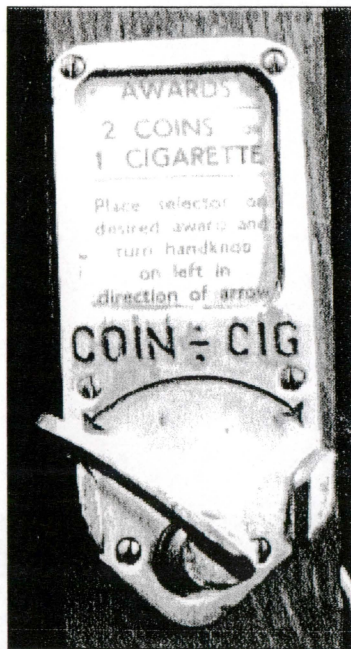


# Coins or a Cig.?

By Robert Rowland

During my time around the local amusement arcades here in Mablethorpe in the mid sixties, I recall seeing various wall machines where you could win a cigarette; not a chocolate one, but the real thing. Machines that I remember seeing at that time were the Oliver Whales pair: **Players Please** and **Win-a-Cig**. No doubt there were others. With these games, the general idea (as with any other allwin) was insert a penny, flick the ball around the track and hopefully the ball would land in a win cup. You would then turn the payout knob and you would receive your cigarette. All good fun.

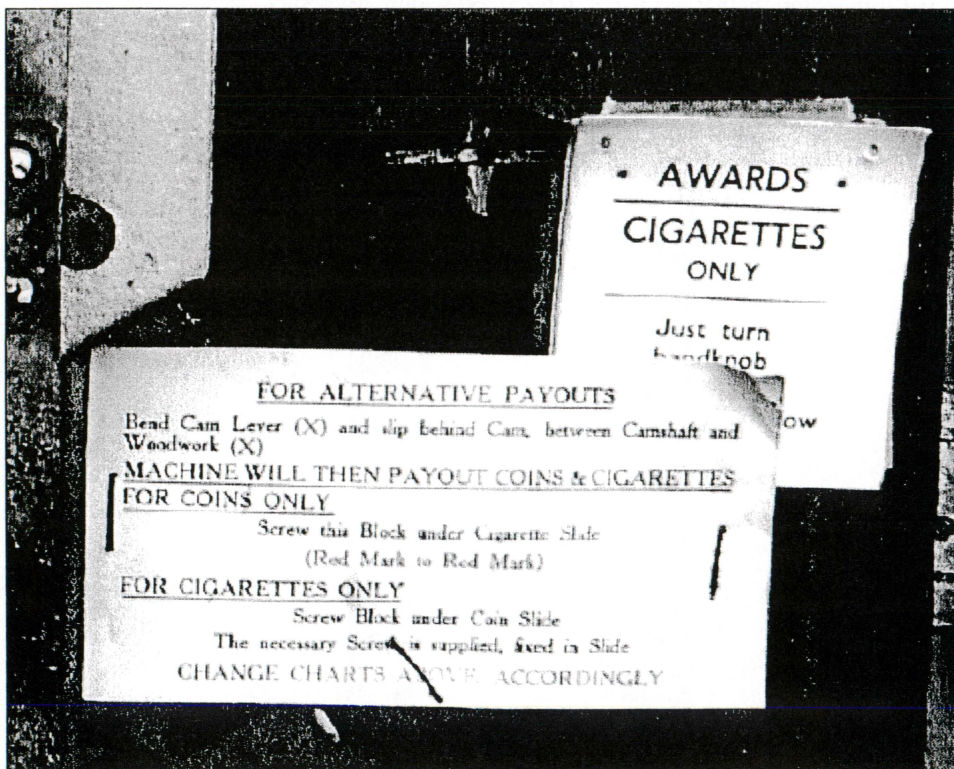
One thing though that I do not remember seeing back then was a Win-a-Cig. machine which gave the option of winning a cigarette or coins, but guess what? In my collection I do have one such machine. It is called **Coinacig** and I am told it was made in 1940 by a company called *Wandautomatt*. Nothing is known about this company (if it existed), so if any of you out there has any information regarding Wandautomatt, please do let Jerry know so that he can pass it on to me and fellow readers of this magazine.





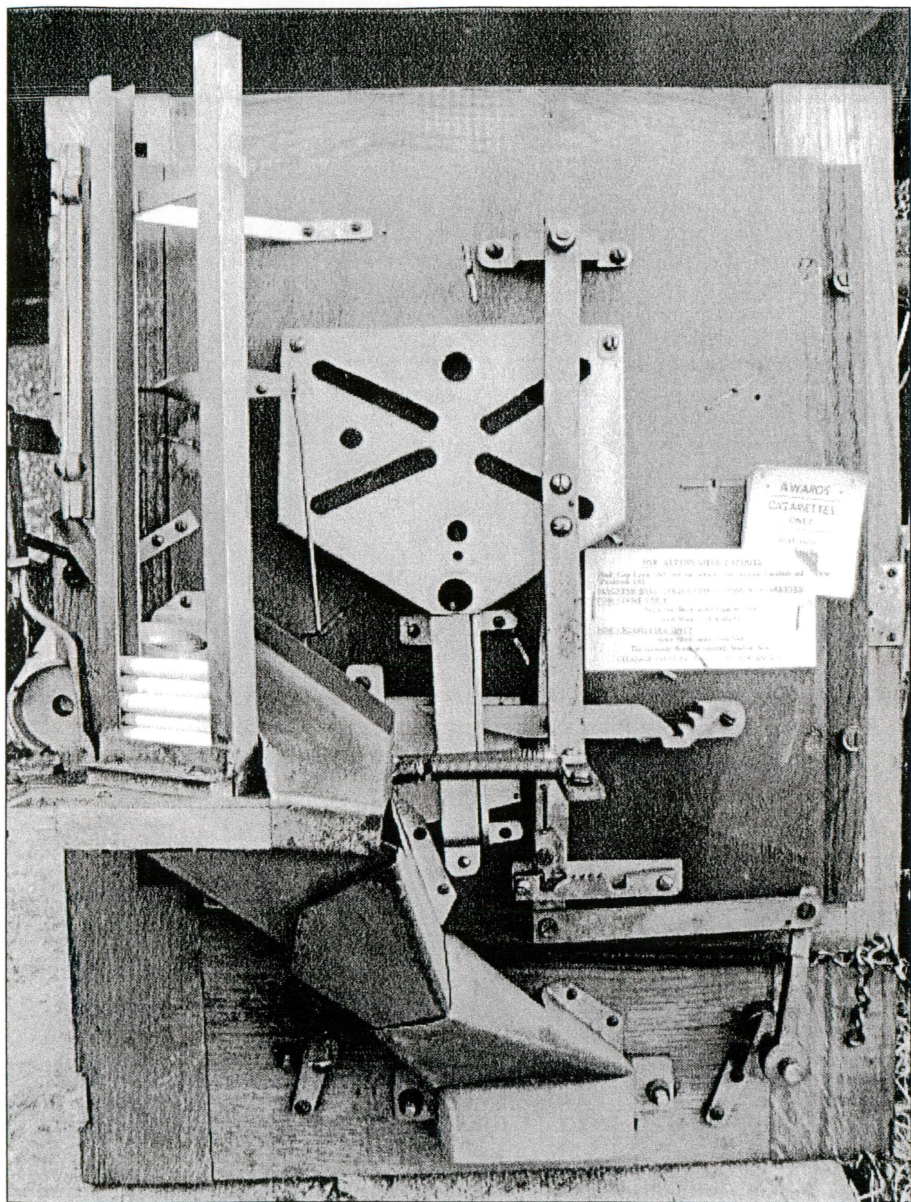
So let's take a look at this machine. It has a nice multi-coloured backflash, with the word *Coinacig* across the top. The bottom half has vertical stripes, running up to the centre, from left to right: dark red, white, yellow, orange, yellow, white, dark red. There are eight win cups in the centre of the playfield, set in a 2, 3, 2, 1 formation, with the lost hole below. The legend around the eight win cups reads '*Shoot ball into any cup to win, then choose award.*' At the top right of the machine is the coin entry, below which is a very clever device, the coin or cig. selector. Once you have achieved a win, you turn the selector lever to the desired award (which is marked in large red letters: COIN – CIG) and then turn the payout knob, whereby your prize is delivered. Above the selector lever is a small award card which reads '*2 coins or 1 cigarette.*'

This is a very clever wall machine, which I imagine would have been quite popular at the time. The mechanism inside gave the operator the option of altering the payout awards in seconds. Supplied with the machine are other award cards which read: '*2 coins and 1 cigarette*' '*2 coins only*' and '*cigarettes only*'.



*The operator instructions for altering the payout options, stapled to the rear of the mech., with the additional award cards tucked behind (it's lucky these have survived).*





*The mechanism of Robert's Coinacig. Although not clear in this picture, the two payout slides (one for coins and one for cig's) are mounted side by side. The selector lever on the front of the machine determines which slide is 'pulled' when the payout knob is turned.*

The chap I bought this machine from said to me, “Do you watch Dads Army on TV? Because if you ever see the episode *Menace from the deep*, they go into an amusement arcade on an old pier, and if you look closely, this machine Coinacig can be seen in the background.”

I have viewed this particular episode and believe he is right. The first sighting appears at just over seven minutes in. One clue is that the Coinacig cabinet is larger than the Oliver Whales ones. Good eyesight is still required, as the machine is always in the distance. If you prefer something less stressful, then go onto Youtube. Search for Coin a Cig and you will see my machine in all its glory, inside and out – a wonderful nostalgic two-minute video clip.

***Robert Rowland***

## Editor's Comment

Many thanks to Robert for telling us about this unique allwin (I say unique, because I have never encountered any other machine that incorporates an option of coin or cigarette payout). I have seen pictures of several of these machines in the past, and although a manufacturer has never been identified, I have always felt that they look suspiciously like Wondermatics machines. Although Robert was unable to supply me with a picture of the case, I can confirm that they are in the Wonders style, e.g. with fluted front edges, routing around the top and base, and of course the trade mark 'roof.' As you will see from the picture of Robert's door on page 14, they also have BMCo type triggers. The trigger backplate is also in the Wonders style, although they appear to be plain plates, without the distinctive 'W'.

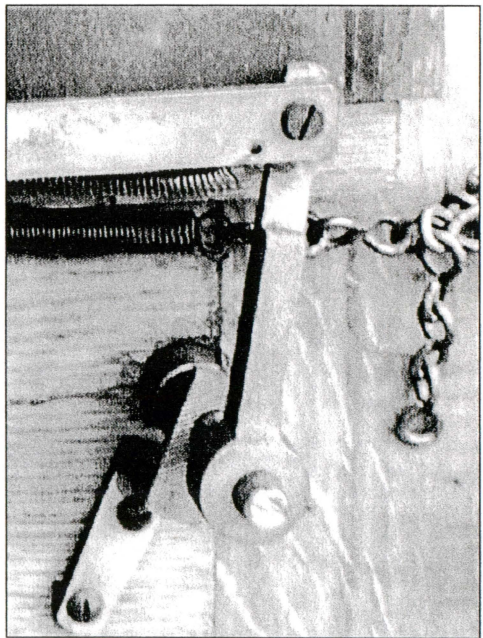
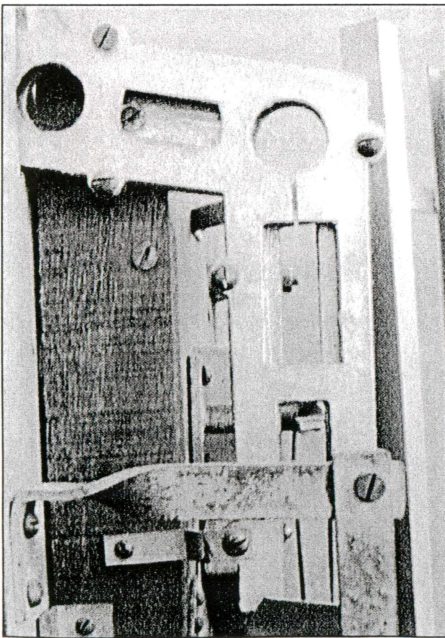
However, it is often the mechanism that gives the best clues in identifying the manufacturer of an unknown machine. Now that I have viewed pictures of Robert's mech., I am satisfied that Coinacig is indeed a Wonders machine (and I suspect a very early one). Those of you who are familiar with Wonders mechanisms will know that they incorporate a number of BMCo parts, and Wonders are the only post WWII machines on which they are found (these parts were either copied, or maybe Wonders acquired the original BMCo patterns). The most obvious example is the coin chute, but there are other parts such as spindle brackets and the payout release latch. There is also one BMCo part on Robert's machine that stands out like a sore thumb! Look at the picture of the mech. on page 17, and note the cast aluminium cage mounted on the backboard, behind the ball cups. This is one of the clues that leads me to suspect this is



an early machine, as the ball runways on Wonders machines are generally routed into the backboard and covered with a flat sheet of tin plate (in common with other post war makers – Oliver Whales, Parkers etc. However, putting aside the BMCo/Wonders connections, there is one piece of evidence which (in my view) conclusively points to Coinacig being a Wonders machine, and that is the payout crank. This long, slender crank is only found on Wonders allwins – none other, either pre or post war; it is unique to Wonders machines.

Robert says he has been told that his machine was manufactured by a company called *Wandautomatt*. Now, I don't know whether this is true or if someone in the past has just made it up – it could just be a bit of slottie folk law (I do have serious doubts that it was made in 1940). But let's break down the word.....Wand auto matt.... It's not far off from Wondermatics, is it? So could this be Wonders first ever machine? Before they thought of the name Wondermatics? Before they thought of a coin entry in the form of 1d? Before they thought of stamping a 'W' on the trigger backplate? Perhaps we'll never know, but if anyone has any further ideas or has any info, do please let me know.

*Jerry*



*Left, the BMCo coin chute on Robert's machine.  
Right, the payout crank, unique to Wonders allwins.*

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# **MECHANICAL MEMORIES MAGAZINE**

## **BACK ISSUES**

**Volume I (April 06 – March 07) £15**

**Volume II (April 07 – March 08) £15**

**Volume III (April 08 – March 09) £15**

**Volume IV (April 09 – March 10) £12**

**Volume V (April 10 – March 11) £12**

**Prices include UK postage**

**Please note: there will be no more reprints**

**When they're gone, they're gone**

**Cheques to:**

**Jerry Chattenton**

**10 Bedford Road, Dartford DA1 1SR**

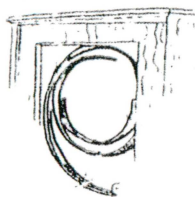
## **Wanted**

**Old trade literature**

**ACA Year Books, ATE Catalogues etc.**

**Jerry 07710 285360**

**Jerry.mmm@tiscali.co.uk**



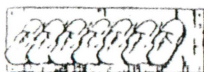
## ALLWIN TRACK

Grooved & chromed just like the original.

Inner with flat & nipple  
17½" inside length  
Middle 18" inside length  
Outer 40" inside length

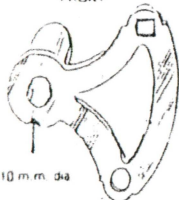


Win Tabs. Red printer on Silver foil sticky backed 12 on a sheet

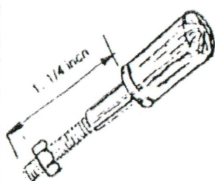


CHROMED 7 ball win gallery. 6 x 1. 9/16

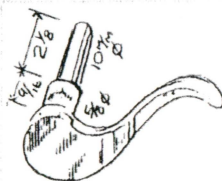
CHROMED TRIGGER FRONT



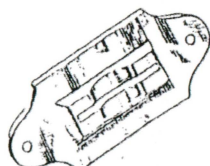
10 m.m. dia



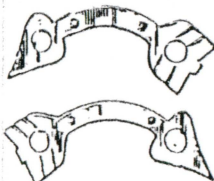
CHROMED THUMB STOP



TRIGGER



COIN SLOT  
to suit 2p but can be filed bigger



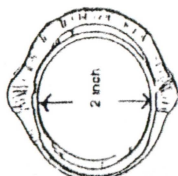
CHROMED ARROWS  
Reversible.

CHROMED PAYOUT BOWL

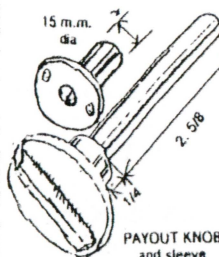


2.5 inch dia cup 2 x 0.25 inch fixing squares at 3.75 inch centres.

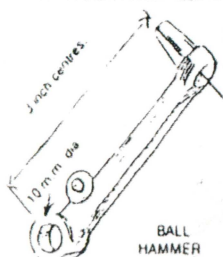
CHROMED KNOB SHIELD



2 x tapped M5 fixing holes on extended nipples 2.1/2 centres.

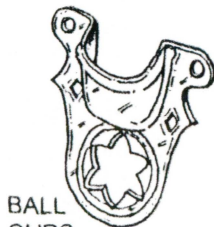


PAYOUT KNOB and sleeve



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## **Collector's Treasury of Antique Slot Machines from Contemporary Advertising (1925-1950)** by Peter Bach.

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Hardback, 479 pages, b/w. **Price: £25**

## **Slot Machines of Yesteryear - Mills of the Thirties Operator's Companion.**

The spirit of the Mills Novelty Company in the hectic Thirties is conveyed in their product brochures, service literature, and in editorial matter from Spinning Reels (the company's own trade journal), together with press releases, promotional literature, advertising flyers etc. in The Billboard trade magazine. Excellent source book.

Hardback, 192 pages, b/w. **Price: £15**

## **Slot Machines of Yesteryear - Mills of the Forties Operator's Companion.**

A source book reproducing a wealth of diverse material from the period: service manuals, parts lists, press releases, promotional literature, advertising flyers etc. tracing the progress of Mills Novelty Company's machines during the WWII-interrupted decade of the Forties. Hardback, 192 pages, b/w. **Price: £15**

## **Slot Machines of Yesteryear - Watling Operator's Companion.**

This volume captures Watling Manufacturing Company's full range from scales to bandits in catalogues, brochures, line folders, broadsides and service data, original patent and mock-up photos of the ROL-A-TOR line, artists' preparatory airbrush renderings for advertising and promotional material and Watling family photos and correspondence. Plenty of legendary anecdotes and well-informed context in the accompanying commentary. Hardback, 192 pages, b/w. **Price: £15**

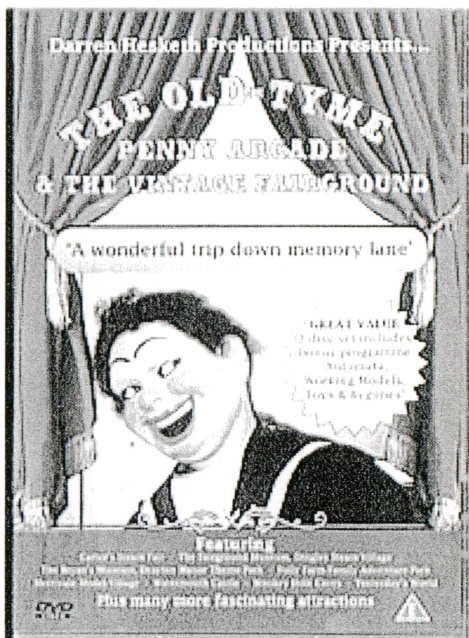
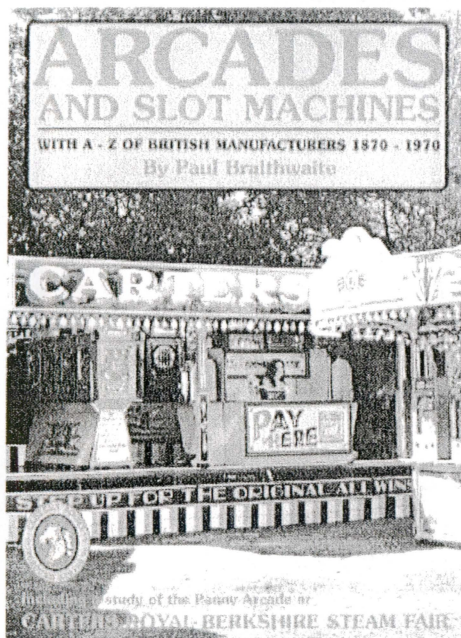


### **Arcades and Slot Machines** by Paul Braithwaite.

Thoroughly researched A - Z survey of the British coin slot industry from 1870 - 1970. Includes a history of travelling, pier-head and town arcades, plus plenty of photos of familiar and rare machines. The definitive British slot machine collector's identification guide. Softback, 105 pages, colour & b/w. **Price: £12**

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